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1 November 1974

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: NIO/WE Comments Regarding  
Post Audit of Finished Intelligence

1. Our comments are given below under three headings — general, periodic, and aperiodic.

General Comment: Caveats

2. As with all consumer reaction surveys conducted over the years, one must be aware of a certain contrived quality to elicited responses. Many readers take these publications for granted, and clearly have to make a large effort to define a conscious attitude when asked. When they do, some lean toward bland approval out of a mixture of politeness, reluctance to admit they don't think much about strengths and weaknesses of publications, or fear that by condemning something, they will help terminate a marginal effort which they seldom if ever read but which might conceivably be of some use someday. Some policy-makers are inclined to a narrow view of intelligence as a reference librarian service, and judge publications only in terms of whether they help or hinder particular hobby horses — an understandable and very human tendency but not a criterion which a professional intelligence service with any self-respect should consider sufficient.

3. The comments below reflect the results of recent soundings among our contacts at the NSC Staff, State and the Pentagon, but these are probably less significant than accumulated reactions volunteered over the months rather than self-consciously elicited.

General Comment: Substance

4. One point recurs in reviewing volunteered consumer response over the months: that is the expressed need and liking for analytical or speculative pieces that "help people to think" about future problems, that help define the inchoate, that challenge conventional assumptions or attitude sets. These phrases, and others like them, have often been used by consumers in responding to issuances such as the essay "What's Wrong With Political Europe?", drafted in this office, which received particular praise from the Secretary of

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Defense, Nelson Rockefeller and others on the PFIAB. It is still called for frequently.

Periodic Publications

5. WE specialists on the NSC Staff find the Weekly a useful publication. Our principal respondent likes the way those articles provide a roundup of complex events. He also likes the Economic Intelligence Weekly. For his own purposes, the Weekly and the Staff Notes are the best Agency publications; others he hardly reads. His boss, Denis Clift, apparently does not read the Weekly at all.

6. The view in State is that the NID has tended to lessen the value of the Weekly and of other periodic publications because the best stuff appears in the NID and reduces need for and interest in other publications.

Aperiodic Publications

7. In the time period being surveyed, the following aperiodic publications received specific high-level reactions:

- NIAM: "The Outlook for European Defense Cooperation" Favorable reaction, particularly in State Department. Paper was used as basis for government/academic conference on the subject sponsored by State.
- NIE: "Prospects for and Consequences of Increased Communist Influence in Italian Politics" Favorable reaction, including Secretary of Defense.
- Two memoranda on Portugal, coordinated with State and DIA, received particularly favorable mention for filling gaps on a new and unfamiliar situation.

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